

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS WHITE HOUSE (FOR BRZEZINSKI)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, PCAT, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-SOVIET CAT

1. SECOND HEADS OF DELEGATION MEETING ATTENDED BY GELB, BLECHMAN, MATHEWS AND LYONS. ON SOVIET SIDE: MENDELEVICH, GALKIN, KUZNETZOV, AND KOZYREV. MEETING LASTED TWO AND A HALF HOURS AND DEALT ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH REGIONAL APPROACH. BEFORE THAT DISCUSSION, GELB RAISED US CONCERN WITH LACK OF SERIOUS SOVIET ATTENTION TO MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION IT WAS AGREED THAT THE NEXT PLENARY WOULD FOCUS ON MILITARY/TECHNICAL AND SOVIETS EXPLICITLY STATED THEIR AGREEMENT THAT THE TWO KINDS OF CRITERIA ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AND THAT THERE CAN BE NO AGREEMENT ON ONE SET WITHOUT AGREEMENT ON THE OTHER. USDEL FELT ISSUE WAS SATISFACTORILY DISPOSED OF.

2. GELB THEN GAVE SOVDEL A SHORT WORKING PAPER OUTLINING US VIEWS ON HOW TO PURSUE REGIONAL APPROACH AND GOALS FOR THIS ROUND. MENDELEVICH ASKED A FEW TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND THEN LAUNCHED INTO AN HOUR LONG PRESENTATION OF QUOTE THOSE AREAS WHERE WE FEEL A CERTAIN LACK OF CONFIDENCE UNQUOTE ABOUT THE REGIONAL APPROACH. THE

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MAIN AREA, WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR NINETY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE TIME, CONCERNED THE QUOTE PRECISE REGIONS UNQUOTE WE HAD SUGGESTED, NAMELY LATIN AMERICA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

3. MENDELEVICH EMPHASIZED THAT WHAT FOLLOWED WOULD BE HIS PERSONAL VIEWS, NOT THE OFFICIAL VIEWS OF THE SOVIET

GOVERNMENT, AND WOULD BE SPOKEN WITH QUOTE UNUSUAL FRANKNESS UNQUOTE. AND THEY WERE. THE QUESTION HE POSED FOR HIMSELF WAS QUOTE DO YOU SHOW AN INTEREST IN THESE PARTICULAR REGIONS? UNQUOTE.

4. TAKING UP AFRICA FIRST HE OUTLINED OUR THREE PROBLEM AREAS AS ZAIRE, NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA, NOTING THAT ALL THREE MIGHT NOW BE NEAR SOLUTION AND THAT WHAT WE ARE REALLY LOOKING AT IS SOUTH AFRICA, THE LAST BULWARK OF RACISM AND COLONIALISM IN THE WORLD. HE EXPOUNDED AT SOME LENGTH ON SOUTH AFRICA'S ECONOMIC, STRATEGIC AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE TO US, NOTING THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS THE ONLY WESTERN CULTURE IN AFRICA. HIS POINT WAS THAT THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH AFRICA IS NOW PARTIALLY HIDDEN BY RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA BUT WHEN IT GETS CENTER STAGE IT WILL BE AN IMMENSE PROBLEM, QUOTE A WORLDWIDE PROBLEM, AND YOUR PROBLEM UNQUOTE. THERE ARE TWO SOLUTIONS TO APARTHEID, EVOLUTIONARY OR REVOLUTIONARY AND HE HAS NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT WE WIL CHOSE THE FORMER. THE LATTER WILL REQUIRE ARMS AND THESE MAY TURN OUT TO BE SOVIET. THIS, MENDELEVICH CONCLUDED, WAS THE SOURCE OF OUR APPREHENSION AND IS WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO PREVENT THROUGH THIS REGIONAL PROPOSAL.

5. HE THEN ADDRESSED LATIN AMERICA WHERE HIS ANALYSIS WAS IDENTICAL EXCEPT THAT IN THIS CASE THE SOURCE OF OUR ANXIETY IS QUOTE THE TERRIBLE SOCIAL BACKWARDNESS UNQUOTE OF LATIN AMERICAN SECRET

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COUNTRIES WHICH IS GOING TO PRODUCE QUOTE EXPLOSIONS - NOT NECESSARILY SOCIALIST UNQUOTE. THIS FEAR EXPLAINS OUR POLICY TOWARD CUBA AND CHILE. WE WORRY THAT OTHER WILL FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE.

6. GELB RESPONDED THAT MENDELEVICH'S ANALYSIS WAS NOT ONLY TOTALLY INCORRECT BUT IRRELEVANT SINCE WHATEVER WE FINALLY AGREE TO WILL BE SEEN BY THE SOVIETS AS BEING IN THEIR OWN INTEREST REGARDLESS OF WHAT OUR MOTIVES ARE. GELB THEN REFUTED ITS SUBSTANCE (VERBATIM AVAILABLE ON REQUEST) AND FINISHED WITH A STRONG STATEMENT THAT QUOTE OUR JOB HERE IS TO FIND A COMMON GROUND ON THE BASIS OF ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST UNQUOTE. HE PROMISED TO TRY TO CONVINCE MENDELEVICH THAT QUOTE SOME OF YOUR INTERESTS OUGHT TO LOOK MORE LIKE OURS UNQUOTE, WITH A FOCUS ON THE SUPERIORITY OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS TO ARMED CONFLICT AND AN INVITATION TO COMPETE IN ECONOMIC AID TO THE DEVELOPING WORLD RATHER THAN IN PROVISION OF WEAPONS.

7. IN CONCLUDING, BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT THIS EXTREMELY FRANK DISCUSSION HAD BEEN VERY USEFUL IN PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING AND IN CLEARING THE AIR. WHILE REITERATING HIS DOUBTS, MENDELEVICH SAID THAT THE SOVIET

SIDE WAS PREPARED TO GET TO WORK ON THE REGIONAL APPROACH
THOUGH HE STILL FELT THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO REACH AGREEMENT
ON THE MILITARY/TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL/LEGAL CRITERIA
BEFORE WE COULD REACH AGREEMENT ON REGIONAL ACTIONS.

COMMENT: -- IN REVIEWING MENDELEVICH'S PRESENTATION, USDEL
BELIEVES IT MOST LIKELY RESULTED FROM LENGTHY SOVIET
DEBATE AS TO WHAT OUR INTENTIONS AND MOTIVES ARE IN THE
CAT ENTERPRISE. BUREAUCRACY MAY WELL HAVE ARGUED THAT OUR
MOTIVES WERE TO PROTECT WEAKNESSES WHICH SOVIETS COULD
OTHERWISE EXPLOIT. MENDELEVICH, WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY
APPEARED TO BE OUT AHEAD OF SOVIET BUREAUCRACY MAY HAVE
DECIDED THAT THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH THIS WOULD BE TO PUT
IT TO US, AND SEE HOW WE RESPONDED RATHER THAN MAKING THE CASE
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HIMSELF. MENDELEVICH'S AGREEMENT TO CREATION OF REGIONAL
WORKING GROUP WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS MAY HAVE PROVIDED ADDED
IMPETUS TO HIS MAKING THIS PRESENTATION. DESPITE THE SOMEWHAT
PARANOID VIEW OF OUR INTENTIONS HE PRESENTED, TONE OF THIS
MEETING AS WELL AS OTHERS, HAS CONTINUED TO BE SERIOUS.
MENDELEVICH SEEMS CLEARLY PREPARED TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES AND
TO MAKE SOME PROGRESS. MOST NOTABLE NEGATIVE NOTE WAS
SOUNDED BY HIS REFERENCE TO OUR ONE-SIDED BEHAVIOR IN REFUSING
TO DISCUSS THEIR NEIGHBORS PROPOSAL, WHILE THEY WERE
PREPARED TO WORK ON ALL OUR PROPOSALS.

RIDGWAY

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED THE WHITE HOUSE.

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